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Kevin L. Sutherland  
Town Manager  
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## MEMORANDUM

To: Bar Harbor Town Council  
cc: Department Heads  
From: Kevin Sutherland, Town Manager  
Date: April 12, 2022  
**Re: Manager Update**

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### **Fire Fighter / EMT positions posted**

In anticipation of the town meeting vote to approve the budget, which includes a new shift in the Fire Department with four new positions, we posted a job ad for these positions last week instead of waiting until after the June vote. Why?

This is a message I received from our Fire Chief:

“Last week, I attended the Maine Fire Chief's Professional Development Conference, and had many discussions with Chiefs from around the state, regarding vacant and newly created firefighting positions. With the new fiscal year, we identified estimated 50 new firefighter positions that will become available throughout the State. That number does not include vacated position from larger departments, that are in constant hiring mode. The competition for available firefighters and the current lack of qualified candidate within the State, will make it challenging to fill the positions. I feel advertising early, will put us at an advantage recruiting qualified applicants.”

The advertisement mentions the pending Town Meeting approval but we hope to create a hiring pool, and be ready to offer jobs upon the approval of the FY23 budget. The union is in support of this effort as well. As of Friday, we've already received three resumes and the post on social media has been shared about 80 times.

### **Congressional Discretionary Spending (CDS)**

Three applications were submitted to Senator Collins office last Friday (4/8) (See [last weeks' Memo](#) for information on the topics). I want to thank Sarah Gilbert and Bethany Leavitt for all the extra time and effort they provided to ensure sound applications, to our grant writers for developing content and helping us navigate the process, and finally to our community partners in providing letters of support for these projects.

The next step is to get our applications into Senator Kings office this Friday (4/15).

### **Other Entities Applying for Grants**

Last week I was made aware the Jesup Memorial Library is actively looking to apply for Senator Kings CDS and asked if the Town would provide a letter of support. Since it is due Friday, the Council does not meet

before then, and it will have no impact on the municipal budget or programming expectations by the town, I have penned my name to a letter.

This is not the first time I have provided something like this to a requesting agency or non-profit (ie – our harbormaster applied for grant funding two weeks ago to help us further develop a plan for the ferry terminal and I provided a letter of support), but I think it's important that I either inform the Council of the letters that I do write (through the weekly memo) or have directive from Council through a motion about the types of letters that I do provide (or both?).

We have a rather hefty agenda for the 19<sup>th</sup>, so depending on list for the first meeting in May, I may request some time to discuss this.

### **Assistant Fire Chief agreement with Mount Desert**

The Mount Desert Fire Department will soon be taking over the responsibilities of Northeast Harbor Ambulance Services which has provided service to the town of [Mount Desert since 1938](#). In order to assist the town in the transition, our two fire chiefs and the ambulance service have been working together to develop protocols, shift procedures, and get staffing up to speed. Part of that effort recognizes the need for Bar Harbor's Assistant Fire Chief to spend some time over in Mount Desert until the new Deputy Fire Chief position is funded and advertised.

However, what the Mount Desert Select Board approved last Monday does not reflect what we were looking to achieve with our assisting in the Fire / EMS transition:

“Fire Chief requests and recommends appointment of John Lennon to the Mount Desert Fire Department effective April 5, 2022, as a temporary part-time employee at a base rate of \$22.68 an hour and overtime rate of \$34.02”

Having the Assistant Fire Chief as a part-time employee in MD with a full-time job here is creating a lot of confusion and concern about when and how he is supposed to fulfill his time. I met with Durlin Lunt on Friday and we've drafted a 6-month contract (based on the Police Chief agreement) with an easy termination clause should the Deputy Fire Chief position be funded and come on board before the agreement expires.

### **Union Negotiations**

Management met with IAFF union leadership again yesterday. We continue to make great progress, but we anticipate at least two more meetings and plan to bring something for Council consideration at their second meeting in May.

No updates on the Public Works Teamsters Union yet, just a request out to begin negotiations before the end of the month of April.